

Message to All USDA HQ Employees

With more rain in the forecast for this afternoon and evening, I wanted to take the opportunity to remind you of the various communication tools that you can use to stay informed in the event of any type of emergency that is affecting USDA in the Washington metropolitan area. This includes announcements on unscheduled leave or closures of any USDA facilities.

You may log onto the Be Prepared website located at <http://www.usda.gov/oo/beprepared>. The USDA Operations Center updates this webpage as events unfold. You can see the operating status of USDA facilities each day, any closures of a USDA facility, and other key information that may impact your commute to or from work. Recorded information on operating status can also be found by calling the Employee Information Line at 1-800-932-1902 or 202-690-3636. For TTY services call 1-800-877-8339.

The Operations Center has agreements in place with local television stations as well as WTOP radio to post closure or delay information. You may also call your office voicemail from home to hear information related to closures or delays to any USDA facility. Messages will only be posted overnight or in the early morning on every phone at HQ with voicemail capability.

From within a USDA facility during normal business hours you may check Channel 6, the internal USDA television channel, for emergency information messages or guidance in a crisis.

All USDA HQ Employees should be able to see emergency messages via CENS (Computer Emergency Notification System). If you do not have CENS on your desktop I encourage you to talk to your agency systems administrator as soon as possible. CENS is a very valuable tool that you can use to receive information quickly and efficiently.

As always, I encourage you to send any questions or concerns to preparedness@usda.gov.

Priscilla B. Carey
Director of Operations